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C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 001385

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/17/2014

TAGS: [KNNP](#) [ENRG](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: IRISH RESPONSE TO EUROFAB DEMARCHE

REF: STATE 198909

Classified By: DCM Jonathan Benton for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) On September 17, DCM and French Charge d'Affaires, Luc Serot Almeras, jointly delivered reftel talking points to James MacIntyre, Department of Foreign Affairs EU Division Counsellor, and Joseph Mooney, Department of the Environment Assistant Principal Officer for Nuclear Safety. Almeras and the DCM noted that the talking points on the pending plutonium shipment had been agreed by the U.S. and French Governments and would also be delivered to the Spanish and Portuguese Governments. At Almeras' urging, the points were not left behind as a non-paper.

2. (C) MacIntyre expressed thanks for the notification, adding that the GOI was aware of the planned shipment and respected our position on the rights of freedom of navigation and passage. Consistent with Ireland's long-standing position in the IAEA, however, the GOI had concerns about the safety, security, and potential environmental impact of the transportation of nuclear materials. He explained that the Irish public shared these concerns and that environmental issues could figure significantly in the October 22 Irish presidential election. (The Greens may be the only party to field a candidate against the incumbent president, Mary McAleese.) MacIntyre said that advance notification would allow the GOI time to plan for any emergencies or risks associated with the nuclear material. He also indicated that the GOI would appreciate prior notification of any future shipments.

3. (C) Mooney mentioned that the Minister of the Environment, Martin Cullen, planned to make a press statement on September 17 in response to Irish media inquiries prompted by a September 16 London newspaper article about the shipment. In addition, on September 17 the Irish Times reported concerns voiced by Rep. Ed Markey (D - Massachusetts) about the adequacy of security arrangements for the shipment. Post has also seen a September 16 internet statement by Greenpeace protesting the shipment. DCM requested that the Minister's statement not formally acknowledge the shipment, primarily for safety and security reasons. Mooney responded that it would help to have assurances on safety, and the DCM reiterated that the shipment would exceed the international maritime safety standards established by the protocols listed reftel. DCM also stressed the experience of the Pacific Nuclear Transport Limited crew, the reinforced structures of the vessels, the availability of assets to address contingencies, and the distance of the ship's routing from Irish territorial waters. Mooney asked when the shipment would occur, and Almeras cited the time frame of the "near future."

4. (C) Comment: Minister Cullen had not issued a statement as of this writing, and Mooney told econoff the afternoon of September 17 that he could not guarantee that a statement would be issued before the weekend. Post will forward to EUR/UBI any press statement that might be released.
KENNY